**Import of Natural Rubber**

5324. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to starred Question No. 309 given in Rajya Sbha on the 18th April, 1994 and state :

(a) the quantity of natural rubber that has been imported since 1990; year-wise figures;

(b) how much rubber has been produced in the country during this period, year-wise figures;

(c) what had been the shortfall of natural rubber between supply and demand within the country during this period, year-wise figures; and

(d) whether there has been any demand to increase the bench mark price of rubber and if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (c) The details are as under :—

| Year | Imported by STC. | Imported by the rubber goods manufacturers directly for export production under export incentive scheme (Quantity in tonnes) | Production | Shortfall between supply & demand |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1990-91 . . | 31699 | 20243 | 329615 | 34,695 |
| 1991-92 . . . | Nil | 14500 | 366745 | 13,405 |
| 1992-93 . . . | Nil | 16498 | 393490 | 20,619 |
| 1993-94 . . . | — | 15828 (April–Dec. 93) | 435000 | 13,000 |
| 1994-95 . . . | — | — | *475000 | *10,000 |

*Estimates.

Note : In order to meet the demand supply gap during lean production season of 1993-94, the rubber goods manufacturers were allowed to import 10,000 MTs of Natural Rubber. However, a total quantity of 4131 MTs only was actually imported.

(d) Yes, Sir. However, the Bench Mark Price was announced as recently as February, 1994 @ Rs. 24,900/- MT for RMA-4 grade and Rs. 24,400/- MT for RMA-5 grade of natural rubber. This bench mark price was recommended taking into account the cost of cultivation and the cost of inputs used by the farmer, Therefore, it is too early to revised the Bench Mark Price of natural rubber now.

**Custom Duty cuts on Industrial Imports under GATT Agreement**

5325. SHRI MOHD. MASUD KHAN :
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA :
SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH :
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY :
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether as per GATT bindings developed nations would cut custom duties on